THE MEANING OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Sadie Tiller Crawley

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Central BAPTIST
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

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SADIE TILLER CRAWLEY

Church membership, preparation for
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NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
THE SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD
of the
SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

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FOREWORD

A twelve-year-old girl joined a Baptist church. After a few months she was lost in the crowd in a large city, and for four years she drifted here and there, going to whatever church she happened to see. Because the people were kind to her in a church of another denomination she was just ready to join it, when a young lady invited her to a Baptist church in which she held membership. Interested friends enlisted her in the Training Union and there, with the help of a real pastor and others who understood, she was taught the meaning of church membership.

The author offers this little book to the boys and girls of the South with the prayer in her heart that it may inspire them to be loyal to the teachings of the New Testament, and that it may lead them to appreciate the privilege of working for Christ in the churches to which they belong.

SADIE TILLER CRAWLEY

1974

DIRECTIONS CONCERNING STUDY, CLASSWORK, EXAMINATION, AND AWARD

The seal for Course II, The Church, in the Baptist Intermediate Union Study Course, is awarded for the completion of this book. Ten periods of forty-five minutes each, or the equivalent, must be given to classwork. The pupil must attend at least six of the ten periods to be eligible for the class examination. A member of the class who fails to attend six periods, or who for other valid reason cannot take the class examination, may take a special examination, but must answer at least twenty questions. The pupil must pass a written examination, without help of any kind, and make a grade of at least 70 per cent. He must read the book through, or pledge that he will read it through within two weeks.

The examination may also be taken by correspondence following home study. The state Baptist Training Union department, or the Training Union Department of the Baptist Sunday School Board, will submit questions for such examination and receive the examination paper. The pupil must answer at least twenty questions on a correspondence examination, without help of any kind, and make a grade of at least 70 per cent. Anyone taking the correspondence examination must read the book through before taking the examination.

J. E. LAMBDIN

Secretary and Editor, Training Union Department, Baptist Sunday School Board.

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MY CHURCH

My church is the place where the Word of God is preached, the power of God is felt, the Spirit of God is manifested, the love of God is revealed. It should be the home of my soul, the altar of my devotion, the hearth of my faith, the center of my affection, and the inspiration of my daily life. Having united with the church in solemn covenant, I will advance its interests by my faithful attendance at its services, by studying the Holy Scriptures, by observing its ordinances, by contributing to its support, by encouraging its members and its leaders and by joining with them in all good works. By thus honoring and serving God I shall share with many others the life of the kingdom of heaven.—*Selected.*

All Scripture references are from the American Standard Version and are used with the permission of the International Council of Religious Education.

CHAPTER I

THE PLAN OF SALVATION

The Bible tells us that in six days God created the heavens and the earth and pronounced all his work good. His greatest creation was man. He placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and gave them permission to eat of the fruit of every tree of the garden, except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He warned them that if they ate of the fruit of this tree they should surely die.

I. The First Sin

1. *The Fact.* The serpent came and tempted Eve, saying: "Hath God said, 'Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'" Eve told the serpent that God said if they should eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, they should die. The serpent denied God's word, and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit, then gave it to Adam and he also ate. Through this act of disobedience sin came into the world. God's law had been broken and the two whom God had created sinless were now sinners.

2. *The Result.* Adam and Eve were afraid when they heard God walking in the garden, so they hid themselves from God. God called them forth from their hiding place and they confessed to him that they had disobeyed his command. The serpent had tempted Eve and Eve had tempted Adam and both had eaten of the fruit. God then pronounced a curse upon the serpent, and then upon Adam and Eve. "And Jehovah God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever—therefore Jehovah God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, . . . So he drove out the man" (Gen. 3: 22-24). God's

word which he had spoken unto Adam and Eve was true: their act of disobedience brought into the world sin and sorrow, suffering and death (Gen. 3: 17-24).

II. What God Did to Save Man From Sin

1. *Made a Promise.* Though sin had entered the world, and the whole human race must suffer for the act of disobedience, God promised to send a Deliverer to save the world from sin. He said to the serpent, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3: 15). God is here declaring that there will be constant war between good and evil in the world, but that someday there would come One who would overcome the serpent—One who would "bruise the head" of humanity's enemy, and put an end to sin and death. This One was to be his Son, who was to give himself that the serpent might be overcome and the lost world be brought back to God.

2. *Prepared the Way.* Sin had entered the world and God had given his promise to save the world from sin. Many centuries passed before God fulfilled his promise. During those centuries God was busy preparing the way for the coming of his Son. He chose the Jewish nation to help him work out his plan. He loved the chosen people and led them, punished them and trained them, shaped them and molded them, and through them prepared the way for the coming Saviour.

3. *Sent Jesus, His Only Son.* After hundreds of years of preparation, one night in Bethlehem of Judea, Jesus, the Son of God, was born. His childhood was spent in the home of Mary, his mother, and Joseph. When he was thirty years old he went forth to begin his work. For three years he "went about doing good." He healed and preached and taught; he chose his disciples and trained them for

their great work; he established his kingdom on earth. Then one day on the cross at Calvary he gave his sinless life that the sinful people of the earth might be brought back to God. He who was without sin "became sin" that we who were sinners might be made free from sin. He, the Innocent One, became guilty, that we, the guilty ones, might become innocent.

III. What Man Must Do to Be Saved

Because Adam and Eve sinned, all the human race are sinners. "All have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3: 23). Jesus, God's Son, voluntarily took the sins of the human race upon himself in order that the world might be made free from the bondage of sin. If a lost person is to find his way back to God, two things are necessary:

1. *He Must Repent of His Sins.* "Except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish" (Luke 13: 3). "Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3: 19).

When a person repents of sin he realizes first of all that *he is lost.* Until one realizes he is lost, he will not want anyone to save him. Once a little girl wandered into the woods. She went on and on, playing as she went. She was lost but she did not know it for a long time. Finally, when the darkness came she started to go back, but she couldn't find the way out. She was lost and now she knew it! She began to cry and call for help. Her big brother, who was looking for her, heard her voice and he came and led her home. So it is with the lost everywhere. They are lost, but they do not realize it. When they do realize that they are lost, they will call for someone to save them; they will want someone to come who can lead them home.

It is not enough that a lost one shall realize he is lost. He must also be sorry for his sins. To repent of sin means three things: (1) Realizing he

is lost; (2) being sorry for sin, and (3) giving up sin. A soldier was asked what was meant by repentance. He replied, "I was leading a wild, sinful life. One day I realized the way I was going and I heard Jesus Christ say to me, 'Right about, face.' I obeyed. That is repentance."

2. *He Must Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.* "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3: 16). "He that believeth on him is not judged: he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3: 18). After one realizes he is lost and is truly sorry for his sin and turns away from it, there is only one thing to do to be saved: believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. A girl once asked, "What does it mean to believe?" Her mother answered, "It means that you feel your need of Jesus and you go to him and say, 'Jesus, here I am. I want to be your girl and I'll try to be what you want me to be and do what you want me to do.' "

When the little girl was lost in the woods, her brother said to her, "Put your hand in mine and come with me and I'll take you home." She did it and he kept his word. Jesus, our Elder Brother, says: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "Come unto me . . . and I will give you rest." Believing on Jesus just means taking him at his word.

IV. Public Confession Follows Salvation

If a person has repented of his sins and has believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, he is saved. The next step after salvation is to confess Christ publicly and offer himself for membership in a church. If one is really saved, he will be glad to confess his Lord before men and he will want to become a member of a church. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession

is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10: 10). It is usually true that the person who is not willing to confess Christ and become a church member is not yet saved. Paul said: "I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 1: 16). When one has repented of sin, believed on Jesus, and confessed his faith in Christ, he is ready to become a member of a church.

CHAPTER II

THE DOOR INTO THE CHURCH

I. The First Baptism

1. *Who Baptized?* "The word . . . came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the region round about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins" (Luke 3:2-3). "In those days cometh John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:1-2). This was the beginning of the practice of baptism. John, the one who baptized, was obeying the "word of God." He was God-appointed to perform the rite. He followed the instructions of Jehovah.

2. *Who Were Baptized?* "Then went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about the Jordan; and they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins" (Matt. 3:5-6). John came with his message of repentance, and those who heard and repented of their sins were baptized.

"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John would have hindered him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? But Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffereth him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway from the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon him; and lo, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3: 13-17). Jesus came asking for baptism, not because he had sinned, but because he wanted to set an exam-

ple for those who were to believe in him. Jesus did not need to be baptized, for he had no sins to confess, but he did it so that through all the years people would understand just what he meant when he said, "Be baptized." He not only told us to be baptized, but he also set the example for us. In his baptism he "fulfilled all righteousness," and God approved his act.

II. The Meaning of the Act of Baptism

"Or are ye ignorant that all who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6: 3-5).

"Having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead" (Col. 2: 12).

Jesus began his earthly ministry with his baptism in the Jordan. He gave his first message to us through his baptism and that message was, "I am going to die, be buried, and rise again"—for his baptism was a picture of his death, burial, and resurrection.

Baptism, then, represents a burial and a resurrection, and is itself a burial in and resurrection from the water. The act of baptism means three things:

1. That we believe that Christ died, was buried, and rose again, to save us from sin and its penalties, and that we are depending upon him for salvation.

2. That by faith in him we have died to sin, have buried the old life, and have risen to walk in newness of life.

3. That through Christ's power we expect our bodies to be raised from the dead and made like his

own glorious body. "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14: 19). Thus we see that baptism declares to the world the Christian's faith, his love, and his hope.

III. Who May Be Baptized

"They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls" (Acts 2: 41). "And many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized" (Acts 18: 8). "But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (Acts 8: 12).

The New Testament teaches that only those who have believed in Jesus should be baptized. In every instance baptism is preceded by personal belief in Jesus as Saviour. Baptists, therefore, do not accept or practice infant baptism. Infants cannot believe. No New Testament scholar has ever been able to show where infant baptism was practiced or taught by Jesus or by the early churches. The great commentator, Lange, member of another denomination says: "Infant baptism cannot, from any point of view, be justified by the Holy Scriptures, and owes its origin to the anti-scriptural idea that children are born under the power of the devil and exposed to eternal condemnation." Infant baptism originated in the Catholic Church.

Baptists believe that if any besides believers are baptized, the meaning of the act of baptism is destroyed. Many people think that Baptists teach salvation by baptism. This is a mistaken idea. We believe that baptism has *nothing* to do with salvation; but it has much to do with obedience. No person should be baptized until he is saved; no person should fail to be baptized after he is saved. "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments" (John 14: 15). Jesus commanded all believers to be baptized. Until he himself changes his command, we have no right to fail to obey.

IV. The Meaning of the Word "Baptize"

The word *baptize* comes from a Greek word which means "to immerse" or "to dip." The word has no other meaning. The New Testament was written in the Greek language and wherever the word for *baptize* occurs Greek scholars admit it means "to immerse." No Greek dictionary gives any other meaning. As early as two centuries after Jesus ascended, there were a few cases of baptism by sprinkling, but for nearly thirteen hundred years after the command "to baptize all nations" was given by Jesus, immersion was the accepted mode of baptism. Sprinkling and pouring were first used to baptize the sick. Then, when people began to believe that baptism helped to save, they wished to baptize the babies, so sprinkling was accepted as baptism in such cases. Cardinal Gibbons of the Catholic Church, says: "Since the twelfth century the practice of baptizing by pouring or sprinkling has prevailed in the Catholic Church, as this manner is attended with less inconvenience than baptism by immersion." The form of baptism was finally changed by the Pope of Rome and sprinkling became the accepted mode of baptism of the Catholic Church. The denominations that have accepted sprinkling as baptism have followed the example of the Catholic Church.

An Episcopalian said to Dr. J. M. Frost: "Of course, Jesus was immersed. Everyone believes that he was immersed. But that is no reason why I should be immersed." All scholars of all denominations admit that Jesus was immersed and that he commanded his disciples to follow his example. The question we must answer is: Whom shall we obey—the Pope or Jesus?

V. Baptism the Door into the Church

"They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls" (Acts 2: 41).

To join a New Testament church the following steps were necessary:

1. *Repent of sin*
2. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*
3. *Publicly confess faith in Christ*
4. *Be baptized*

Since there were four necessary steps into the churches of the New Testament, Baptist churches follow their example. To join a Baptist church four steps are necessary:

1. *Repent of sin*
2. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*
3. *Publicly confess faith in Christ*
4. *Be baptized*

The first two steps—repentance and belief—lead to salvation.

The last two steps—confession and baptism—lead to church membership.

Jesus is our Master. The New Testament is our Guide. Therefore, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it" (John 2: 5).

Quotations on Baptism from Sources Not Baptist

I. Greek Lexicons

1. Thayer: "Baptism, to dip repeatedly, to immerse. An immersion in water." (From "A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, 1887.")
2. Sophocles: "Baptize, to dip, to immerse, to sink." (From "Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods.")

II. Dictionaries and Encyclopedias

1. Smith: "Baptism properly and literally means immersion."
2. Britannica: "The word is derived from the Greek to dip, or wash."

III. Scholars and Preachers

1. Martin Luther: "Baptism is a Greek word and may be translated 'immerse.' I would have those who are to be baptized to be altogether dipped."
2. Dr. Alfred Plummer, Presbyterian: "Baptize, I immerse. It is only when baptism is administered by immersion that its full significance is seen."
3. John Calvin: "The word baptize signifies to immerse."
4. John Wesley: "Buried with him by baptism —alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion."
5. Wall (Episcopalian): "Immersion was in all probability the way in which our blessed Saviour and, for certain, the way the ancient Christians received their baptism."
6. Brenner (Catholic): "For thirteen hundred years was baptism an immersion of the person under water."
7. A. T. Bledsoe (Methodist): "With all our searching we have been unable to find in the New Testament a single expressed declaration or word in favor of infant baptism. This may be deemed by some a strange position for a Pedobaptist. It is by no means, however, singular, since hundreds of learned Pedobaptists have come to the same conclusion."
8. Dr. Schaff (Presbyterian): "There is no trace of infant baptism in the New Testament."
9. John Wesley (from his journal): "Indicted for refusing to baptize Mr. Parker's child other than by dipping, except the parents would certify it was weak and not able to bear it."

CHAPTER III

THE LORD'S SUPPER

I. The First Supper

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it; and he gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

"And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins. But I say unto you, I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives" (Matt. 26:26-30).

II. The Meaning of the Supper

"The Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come" (1 Cor. 11: 23-26).

Jesus left us this Memorial Supper to help us remember forever three things:

1. *That He Died for Us.* In just a few hours after the first Supper, Jesus was to hang on the cross. His body was to be broken and his blood shed for the sins of the world. He wanted to leave behind him something that would keep his followers reminded of the fact that he had given his life for

the sins of the world. So he gave the Supper and said, "Do this in remembrance of me."

When I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

See, from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down:
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

2. *That Our Spiritual Lives are Sustained by Him.* "He is our life, and we live in him; he is our all in all, and we are complete in him." When we eat the Lord's Supper, we are to remember that just as our physical bodies require food in order that they may live and grow, so our souls must feed upon the Bread of Life if we are to grow in him.

3. *That He is Coming Again.* "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death *till he come.*" Jesus knew that though he was to be crucified and buried, he would be victor over death and the grave; that he would ascend to the Father, and that some day he would come again to take those who love him to live with him. So he left us the Lord's Supper to keep us reminded and watching for his return.

Living, he loved me; dying, he saved me;
Buried, he carried my sins far away;
Rising, he justified freely forever,
One day he's coming—O glorious day!

III. The Supper a Church Ordinance

"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you" (Matt. 28:19-20).

"And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them" (Acts 20: 7).

"Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you" (1 Cor. 11:2).

Jesus left to his church two ordinances: baptism and the Lord's Supper. He also gave the order in which the ordinances were to be observed: (1) make disciples, (2) baptize, (3) teach to observe the things commanded. Therefore, Baptists believe the Lord's Supper is for those who have confessed Christ, been baptized and have united with the church. Dr. Frost says: "The Lord's Supper is a church ordinance for church administration to church members." Baptists are not alone in this belief. In regard to the Supper, all denominations agree in three points:

1. That only the *saved* should eat the Supper
2. That only the *baptized* should eat the Supper
3. That only *church members* should eat the Supper

Dr. Wall, a great Episcopalian, says: "No church ever gave the communion to any person before he was baptized; among all the absurdities that were ever held, none ever held this,—that any person should partake of the communion before he was baptized." Scholars from all other denominations offer this same testimony.

Why, then, do Baptists not offer the Lord's Supper to those of other denominations? The answer is evident: *because they have not been baptized.* Baptist churches do not accept pouring and sprinkling as baptism; immersion only is baptism, according to the teachings of Jesus and the early churches. If only the baptized are to partake of the Lord's Supper, Baptists would be inconsistent if they offered the Supper to those who practice sprinkling or pouring for baptism. Baptists do not believe in "close communion" nor do they practice it any more than all other denominations do; but Baptists do believe in the New Testament baptism (immersion). "Baptist churches, therefore, restrict their observ-

ance of the Lord's Supper to church members of their own denomination. Believing as they do, they could not practice otherwise. They must change their principles or continue their practice." (Dr. Frost).

IV. Our Responsibility in Eating the Lord's Supper

"Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup" (1 Cor. 11:27-28).

These words of warning were spoken to church members. Paul was explaining that the manner of some in eating the Supper had been wrong. They had been greedy and had forgotten the purpose of the Supper, "not discerning the Lord's body." Many who read Paul's words say, "I cannot take the Supper; I am not worthy." This is a misinterpretation of his words. The word "unworthy" does not refer to the character of those partaking of the Supper, but to the manner in which they eat. No person is worthy in himself, but those who have believed in Christ and obeyed his commands may eat worthily of the Supper, by remembering his death for our sins, and by fixing their thoughts upon him who gave himself for us.

There are two reasons why every church member should eat the Lord's Supper:

1. *Christ Commanded it.* Just as he commanded those who believed to be baptized, so he commanded that they should eat this Supper in memory of him. No baptized believer has a right to fail to obey this command.

2. *It is Essential to our Obedience.* Neither baptism nor the Lord's Supper is essential to our salvation, but both are essential to our obedience. We are to do both because he said it; we are to do both *just as he said it.* "If a man love me, he will keep my word" (John 14: 23).

Quotations on the Lord's Supper from Sources not Baptist

1. Dr. Wm. Hall (Church of England): "No church ever gave the communion to any person before he was baptized."
2. Dr. T. O. Summers (Southern Methodist): "Most certainly baptism is a prerequisite to communion."
3. Dr. Hibbard (Methodist): "The Baptists and Pedobaptists both agree in rejecting from the table of the Lord all who have not been baptized. The only question that divides us is, What is baptism?"
4. *The Interior* (Presbyterian paper): "We agree with Baptists in saying that unbaptized persons should not partake of the Lord's Supper. Their views compel them to believe that we are not baptized and shut them up to close communion. To chide Baptists with bigotry because they abide by the logical consequence of their system is absurd."
5. Dr. Bullock (Methodist): "Close communion, as it is generally termed, is the only logical and correct course for Baptist churches to pursue. A Baptist maintains that only baptized believers have any right to the Lord's table; that baptism is only by immersion. How can they, therefore, consistently invite me, having only been sprinkled, and that in infancy, to commune with them? Let us honor them for stern steadfastness in maintaining what they believe to be a Bible precept."
6. *Episcopal Recorder* (paper): "The close communion of the Baptist churches is but the necessary sequence of the fundamental idea out of which their existence has grown. With Baptists, immersion only is baptism, and they, therefore, of necessity exclude from the Lord's table all who have not been immersed."

CHAPTER IV

OUR CHURCH COVENANT

A covenant is an agreement between two or more people. Baptists have no set creed which must be adopted by all the churches. Our creed is the New Testament. Most Baptist churches, however, have a church covenant—an agreement between the members to do certain things. The covenant outlined in this chapter is the one most generally used among Baptist churches. Following is a copy of our church covenant.

CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we do now in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family worship and secret devotion; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all

tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drink as a beverage, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Saviour, to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that, when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

I. Introduction

"Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we do now, in the presence of God, angels and this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ."

In these words we declare our faith in Jesus as a personal Saviour, and our obedience to him in baptism. Then, as church members, we promise one another and our Lord to "do those things that shall please him."

II. Our Duties to the Church

We make five promises concerning our work for and in the church: We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit:

1. *To walk together in Christian love.* (This means that we are to love all the members of the church, harboring no malice or unkind thought toward them.)

2. *To strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, in holiness and comfort.* (We are to study that our church may be wise; live pure, that our church may be holy; give of our sympathy, that our church may comfort those who mourn, and bring hope to those who are lost.)

3. *To promote its prosperity and spirituality.* (We are to help it to grow in numbers, in service and in spiritual power.)

4. *To sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines.* (We will not fail to be present at its services, but will be faithful in attendance and reverent in spirit; we will observe its ordinances, be true to its teachings, and honor whatever rules are made for the good of its work.)

5. *To contribute cheerfully and regularly* to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations. (We are to recognize our duty to give systematically and proportionately that God's Word may be given to all people, that the ministry may be cared for, that the needs of the poor may be met, and that the gospel may be preached in all the world.)

III. Our Personal Lives and Habits

We make seven promises concerning our daily living. We also engage:

1. *To maintain family and secret devotions.* (We are to take time in our homes to talk with God and read his Word each day.)

2. *To religiously educate our children.* (This is the promise parents make. Children are to be taught to know and serve Jesus.)

3. *To seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances.* (We will try to win to Jesus those who are lost in our homes and community.)

4. *To walk circumspectly in the world.* (We are to be careful of our actions, and so live that all who see us will know we are Christians.)

5. *To be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment.* (We are to be fair in every situation; remember our promises and keep them; and so act that no one will have a right to criticise us for what we do.)

6. *To avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger.* (We will not tell unkind or untrue stories about anyone; we will return good for evil; we will control our tempers.)

7. *To abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage,* and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour. (We are not to buy, sell or drink whiskey, and we are to do all we can to help others to be true to Christ.)

IV. Duties to Others

We are to be true not only to our church and in our own daily lives, but there are five things we promise to do for others. We further engage:

1. *To watch over one another in brotherly love.* (We are to keep in touch with the members of our church and help them in every time of need.)

2. *To remember each other in prayer.* (Each day as we pray we are to ask God's blessing on our church and all its members.)

3. *To aid each other in sickness and distress.* (If any are sick or in trouble, we will help in every possible way.)

4. *To cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling, and courtesy in speech.* (We are to be kind and thoughtful in our actions toward rich and poor alike; we are to speak words of encouragement and cheer.)

5. *To be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation* and, mindful of the rules of our Saviour, to secure it without delay. (We are not to "wear a chip on our shoulder," and if some member should hurt us, we are to show the spirit of Christ and forgive, and ask to be forgiven if we are wrong, just as Jesus would have us do.)

V. Conclusion

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word. (If we move to another place to live, we are to remember to unite with a Baptist church at that place. Wherever we live, we are to be busy for Jesus.)

CHAPTER V

THE CHURCH ORGANIZED FOR SERVICE

I. The Founder of the Church

"He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:15-18).

Before Jesus came, there was no church. He is its Founder and Head. It is the only organization on earth that was established by the Son of God. There are lodges and secret societies and fraternities and clubs everywhere, but they are of human origin. The church was born in the heart of God and established on earth to glorify his name and to do his work.

"And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place . . . And there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls . . . And all that believed were together, and had all things common . . . And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved" (Acts 2: 1, 41, 44, 47).

II. The Membership of the Church

"And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved" (Acts 2: 47). Jesus never intended for one who does not love him to join a church. A Baptist church is a body of *baptized believers* who have voluntarily banded themselves together to ob-

serve Christ's commands and to extend his kingdom in the earth, just as New Testament churches were bodies of baptized believers banded together for this same purpose. "They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls" (Acts 2: 41). Wherever there is such a group united for such a work, it is the church for which he gave himself.

III. The Church Organized for Service

"All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28: 18-20).

In order to carry out the commands of Christ, our churches have been organized into departments, each department with its definite task. All the departments together make the completed whole. We may think of a church as a great wheel with five necessary spokes, each spoke doing its own work, and all working together to make effective the one great wheel of which they are a part.

The five spokes working separately could not make the wheel render the service for which it was intended. If one spoke should say, "I'll do my own work but I will not help the other spokes; in fact, I'll try to hurt their work," the wheel would fail. If one spoke should become weak and cease to do its work, the wheel would be crippled in its usefulness.

So it is with our churches. Each organization must co-operate with every other organization, while it tries to make its own work all that the Master wants it to be. The five organizations to which the members of a church should be loyal are:

1. *The W.M.U.* Jesus said, "Lift up your eyes and look on the fields." The task of every Baptist church is a missionary task. The church is it-

self a missionary organization. So our missionary organizations within the church are simply missionary organizations within the larger organization. Every service of our church should be missionary. However, the women and the young people of our churches have been definitely studying the needs of the world for years. The W.M.U. organizations, with the graded programs reaching all ages, has been one of the greatest missionary factors in the world. The men in their Brotherhoods are becoming organized for definite missionary activities. The missionary organizations of the church are the knowledge-giving organizations. "Know, and you will give; know, and you will pray; know, and you will go." Every church member should be loyal to the missionary organizations.

2. *Prayer Service.* Jesus said, "My house shall be called a house of prayer." God promises his richest blessings to those who pray. Wednesday evening should be a sacred evening in the life of every church member. A consecrated Christian woman has charge of a large boarding house in one of our cities. Her duties in the evening make it impossible for her to attend the prayer service of her church, but on that evening those in the home are asked to refrain from their games and other forms of amusement during the hour in which her church is at prayer. She is loyal to the prayer service of her church. A church member who neglects the prayer service, without an excuse well pleasing to God, is untrue to the church convenant and is hindering the work of the church. Those church members that indulge in social pleasures while the church is calling them to prayer are stumbling-blocks in the life of the church, and are preventing the coming of God's kingdom on earth. The church member who deliberately chooses to stay away from the prayer service is untrue to the highest interests of the church for which Christ gave himself.

3. *Preaching Service.* The most important service of a church is that service in which the pastor brings

to the members God's message from God's Word. The pastor is God's prophet. His calling is sacred. His is the highest mission on earth. No church member has a right to be absent from the preaching services of his church. Occasionally young people will drift from church to church; they go with the crowd; they go to other churches because their friends go there; they attend Sunday school and Training Union, then go home or somewhere else. This fact each church member needs to remember: *If I have joined a church, God expects me to be loyal to that church. I am responsible for the success of its services. My place is in my church when my pastor preaches. Unless God prevents, it is my highest duty and privilege to be there. I sin when I allow any earthly attachment or interests to take me away from the church to which I have pledged my loyalty and allegiance.*

4. *Sunday School.* The psalmist says: "The entrance of thy Word giveth light." Each church member should be loyal to the school in which the Word of God is taught. Each Sunday morning at the teaching hour every member should be found in his place, Bible in hand, with mind and heart open, seeking the way and will of God. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path" (Psalm 119: 105). It is the Bible that tells us of Jesus; it is the Bible that shows us the way to God; it is the Bible that strengthens and guides and helps us to know his will. We fail to be loyal to our church covenant when we fail in our loyalty to the teaching service of our church.

5. *Training Union.* During the second World War thousands of our young men heard the call for soldiers. They answered. They enlisted. They put on the uniform. But they were not ready for battle. Though they were willing to fight, their country said, "You must first enter a training camp and learn how to be a good soldier. Your country needs more than *willing* soldiers; it needs *trained*

soldiers." And our boys won the war because they were not only willing, but were also trained to fight.

In the battle against sin, our Father is calling for *trained* soldiers. It is not enough to enlist and put on the uniform. We must learn how to fight. So the church has a Training Union. Every young church member should be loyal to the Training Union if he wishes to do his best for his church and his Master. The Baptist Training Union motto is: "We study that we may serve," and the aim is: "Training in church membership." Every untrained church member should enlist in the Baptist Training Union. There is a definite place for all untrained Christians in this organization.

The Baptist Training Union definitely trains in the following:

(1) Public speaking and testimony
(2) Public and private prayer
(3) Bible reading and Bible study
(4) Doctrines of the church
(5) Missions
(6) Personal service
(7) Systematic giving
(8) Practical church work,—holding office, teaching, leading, presiding

In other words, the Training Union seeks to prepare every young Christian to fill the place that the Master calls him to fill. Its chief desire is to fit its members to be "workmen that need not to be ashamed." No young Christian can be truly loyal who neglects the training of mind and spirit for the service of the Master through the church for which he gave himself.

May I be faithful unto the task he's assigned me,
Constant in service, earnest in all that I do;
May I be faithful, out in the field may he find me,
When he returneth, patient and loyal and true.

CHAPTER VI

CHRISTIAN GIVING

I. The First Offering

"And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto Jehovah. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And Jehovah had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect" (Gen. 4: 2-5).

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he had witness borne to him that he was righteous, God bearing witness in respect of his gifts: and through it he being dead yet speaketh" (Heb. 11: 4).

The members of this first family that God made brought offerings to him. The custom is as old as the human race. God may have told them that they were to bring their offerings to him, or he may have planted in the human heart the instinct to give. We do not know how it was, but we do know this: every person since that time who has really known and loved God has wanted to bring gifts to him.

II. Why We Should Give

The church covenant says: "We promise to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations." If we are church members, it is just as much our duty to give to help carry on the work of the church as it is our duty to be baptized and attend the church services. There are four reasons why we should give:

1. *Because God is the Owner of All that We Have.* "The earth is Jehovah's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Psalm 24: 1). "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith Jehovah of hosts" (Hag. 2: 8). "For all that is in the heavens and in the earth is thine . . . both riches and honor come of thee . . . and in thy hand is power and might . . . for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee" (1 Chron. 29: 11-14).

We do not own anything. All that we have—life, mind, body, talents, money, time, home—are gifts of God. God made all things and he lets us use the things he has made, but they are his. We are stewards only. He trusts us to use for him all that he lets us have, and he asks that we bring our offerings to him so that we will not forget the *owner.*

2. *Because He Commands It.* "Honor Jehovah with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase" (Prov. 3:9). "Give, and it shall be given unto you" (Luke 6: 38). "Ascribe unto Jehovah the glory due unto his name: Bring an offering, and come into his courts" (Psalm 96:8).

The Bible is full of God's calls to his people to bring him their offerings. He promises his blessing to those who obey; to those who refuse, he says: "Ye are cursed with the curse; for ye rob me" (Mal. 3: 9).

3. *Because Our Gifts Are Needed for His Work.* "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Rom. 10: 13-15.)

The lost world is waiting for the gospel. Many men and women are ready to go. But they cannot go until the church members "bring their offerings unto the Lord." The needs are everywhere. The hungry are to be fed; the sick are to be healed; the

lost are to be saved. Jesus established his church to do for him this work in the world. The church can do it only when the church members bring their offerings.

4. *Because Giving Makes Us Like Him.* No person can be like Jesus who does not give. "God so loved . . . that he gave" (John 3:16). "Charge them . . . that they have their hope set . . . on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works,—ready to distribute" (1 Tim. 6:17-18). The Father calls us to give in order that the world may see him living in us. We often sing:

> Be like Jesus this my song,
> In the home and in the throng,
> Be like Jesus all day long,
> I would be like Jesus.

Can we imagine Jesus keeping his money and using it for his own pleasure while all around him were people in need? Can we imagine Jesus keeping his money for himself while men were sick and hungry and cold and lost, and calling for help? Can we imagine Jesus building beautiful homes and spending thousands on luxuries while men and women were begging to be sent with the gospel story to the nations that wait? Can we imagine Jesus spending more each year on his clothes and food than he gave to his church for all its work?

The more we deny ourselves, the more we sacrifice; the more we give, the more like Jesus we shall be.

III. God's Plan for Our Giving

God, the owner of all things, has not only commanded us to give, but he has given us a plan to follow. He has told us in his Word how he wants us to make our offerings. He clearly offers five suggestions:

1. *Give Cheerfully.* "Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart: not grudgingly, or

of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9: 7). God looks on the heart and he knows when we cheerfully bring our offerings to him. An unwilling gift is not acceptable. God refused to accept the first gift that was ever offered him, because the spirit of the giver was wrong (Gen. 4: 5). Because God loved us, he gave us his best. He expects us, because we love him, to gladly give our best to his church.

2. *Give Systematically.* "Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper" (1 Cor. 16: 2). "They shall not appear before Jehovah empty: every man shall give as he is able" (Deut. 16:16-17). We are plainly told that on the first day of the week we should bring our offerings to God. When we come to worship, we are to bring our gifts, for our offering to him is a part of our worship. "And they fell down and worshipped him; and opening their treasures they offered unto him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh" (Matt. 2: 11).

3. *Give Proportionately.* "Bring ye the whole tithe into the store-house" (Mal. 3:10). "And of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee" (Gen. 28: 22). "And all the tithe . . . is Jehovah's: it is holy unto Jehovah" (Lev. 27: 30). "Ye tithe mint and anise and cummin . . . these ye ought to have done" (Matt. 23: 23).

In acknowledgment of God's ownership of all things, and to carry on the work of his church, God requires us to give a certain proportion of our income to him. The proportion which he commanded in the Old Testament and which Jesus indorsed in the New Testament is the *tithe,* or one-tenth of what we have. That means that out of every dollar that comes to us, we are to give to God ten cents. When we withhold our tithe, we are robbing God and spending that which is not ours. God's command is, "Bring the tithe into the storehouse." Those of us who fail to do it are unfaithful servants and un-

worthy followers of Jesus. If we are not making money, we should save a tithe out of the gifts we receive from others, and God will honor our offering. No Christian has a right to bring less than one-tenth to God.

4. *Give Individually.* "Upon the first day of the week let *each* one of you lay by him in store" (1 Cor. 16: 2). God expects from each member of the church an offering each week. Just as each person must accept Christ for himself, so each person is to bring his own offering. A father cannot be saved for his child; he cannot attend the church services for his child; neither can he give for his child. The responsibility is an *individual* responsibility. God wants each one to worship him with his gifts.

5. *Give Sacrificially.* "And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need" (Acts 2:44-45). "And there came a poor widow, and she cast in two mites . . . And he called unto him his disciples, and said unto them, . . . This poor widow cast in more than all they that are casting into the treasury: for they all did cast in of their superfluity; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living" (Mark 12: 42-44).

When we have brought our tithe to God, we have not yet made an offering, for the tithe is what we owe him. It is a debt. Our offerings are the gifts we make beyond the tithe,—gifts of love. If we wish to be and do our best for the Master and the church, the tithe will be the *least* that we give, and then, through sacrifice, we will bring our love offerings to him. God judges our gifts not by what we give, *but by what we keep.* The widow's gift was larger than all others, because she gave all that she had. In a certain church a love offering was taken for missions. A widow, who washes for her living, gave one dollar. Another, who has a large income, gave

five dollars. Which one was a sacrificial giver? Which one gave the more?

An offering was taken for the orphans. One boy, whose father works for a fair salary, gave five dollars. Another boy, who has a large income, gave twenty-five cents. Which one was a sacrificial giver?

An offering was taken for the sufferers in the great flood district. One member of an Intermediate union, whose mother works, gave fifty cents. Another member, whose father has an ample income, forgot to give anything. Which one was a sacrificial giver?

I gave my life for thee,
What hast thou given for me?

CHAPTER VII

WINNING OTHERS

In our church convenant we promised "to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour." This means that we are to try to win souls for the Master and to enlist them in his service.

I. Winning Others is the Main Task of the Church

"And Jesus came . . . and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations" (Matt. 28: 18).

"But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1: 8).

"As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20: 21).

When Jesus established his church, he established it for a purpose. He had finished his work on earth in the giving of himself on the cross. He had died for the sins of the world. Somebody must be trusted to tell the story to the world. It was to his church that he assigned this glorious task. His plan was that when one was saved, that one would tell another, and that other another,—and on and on the good news would go, each saved person a soul-winner. "They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word" (Acts 8: 4). The church may do many things; it may put on many different kinds of programs; but its main task is to win the lost to Jesus and to enlist the saved in his service. God has not called just a few to be soul-

winners. He says to each one who knows him, "Go and tell." "He that is wise winneth souls" (Prov. 11: 30).

II. What a Soul-Winner Needs to Know

If we are to win souls for the Master, there are three things we must know:

1. *We Must Know God.* The blind cannot lead the blind. We must first be Christians ourselves if we are to reveal Jesus to others. We must know him as our Saviour; we must know him as our daily companion; we must know him as our Master and Lord.

2. *We Must Know God's Word.* It is God's Word, through the Holy Spirit, that convicts the lost of sin; it is his Word that gives promise of forgiveness; it is his Word that tells the sinner how he may be saved; it is his Word that gives assurance of eternal life to those who believe. In his Word is counsel for the saved, and food upon which the redeemed soul shall feast. Without a knowledge of God's Word we can never win others to him. With his Word stored in our minds and hearts and lived out in our lives, we can bring out of darkness into light those who are lost. "Is not my word like fire? saith Jehovah; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jer. 23: 29.)

3. *We Must Know Condition and Need of the Lost.* "The wicked shall be turned back into Sheol, Even all the nations that forget God" (Psalm 9:17). "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41). Too many Christians fail to realize the terrible condition of the lost. We have not stopped to think that it will mean eternity in hell. If we did realize the awfulness of it, every Christian would be a soul-winner.

The lost person has one great need: he needs Jesus. "Thou hast made us for thyself, and the

heart of man is restless until it finds its rest in Thee" (Augustine). We may offer the lost person all kinds of remedies, but Jesus is the only remedy for sin. "In none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

III. What a Soul-Winner Needs to Do

Knowledge without action is useless. "If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them" (John 13: 17). There are four things a soul-winner needs to do, if he is to win others:

1. *He Must Pray.* "All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11: 24). "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do" (John 14: 13). "My heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved" (Rom. 10: 1).

Prayer is our way into the will of God. Prayer is the mightiest weapon against sin and Satan that the world knows. Therefore, we must pray for the lost. We must pray definitely and earnestly and in faith; we must "pray without ceasing." We cannot win others to Jesus unless we pray.

2. *He Must Seek.* "For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19: 10). "And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and constrain them to come in, that my house may be filled" (Luke 14: 23). "He findeth first his own brother . . . and he brought him unto Jesus" (John 1:41-42).

The lost will not often seek us; we must seek them. Seek them and bring them to Sunday school where God's Word is taught; seek them and bring them to the preaching service where the gospel is preached; seek them and bring them to every place where the Spirit of God may touch their hearts; seek them in some quiet place and tell them about Jesus and his power to save from sin. The soul-winner must be a seeker of the lost.

3. *He Must Go.* "And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I; send me" (Isa. 6: 8).

The first word in the Great Commission is, "Go," and the last word of the Master, before he ascended was: "Ye shall be my witnesses . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1: 8). So every Christian must go in his name and bring the lost to him. Some must go in the home places; some must go to the nations far away; but *all* must go. If we cannot go ourselves, we must go through others. One young woman was willing to go, but ill health prevented. But for years she went; through her prayers and her gifts she was a soul-winner at home and in the foreign lands. Each of us must go; the Master will show the way.

4. *He Must Live.* "Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5: 16). "And the multitudes gave heed with one accord unto the things that were spoken by Philip, when they heard, and saw the signs which he did" (Acts 8:6). "For he [Barnabas] was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit . . . and much people was added unto the Lord" (Acts 11: 24).

If we are to be soul-winners, we need to live the things we profess. The lost look on our lives. If they do not see Jesus in us, they will not listen to what we say. A Japanese boy wanted to be a Christian. His father was distressed about it and went to see the Buddhist priest. He said, "How can I keep my son from becoming a Christian?"

The priest answered, "There is one sure way. It is a very expensive way, but I guarantee it will work. Send your boy to America and let him see how the Christians live, and he will never be a Christian."

We must *live* Christ, if we are to give Christ.

IV. Winning the Saved for Service

"Go ye . . . make disciples . . . baptizing . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded" (Matt. 28:19-20). Our task is but half-done when we have led a soul to Christ. We must enlist that soul for service. God has something for every Christian to do. It is the business of the church to help each Christian find his task, and fit him for the doing of it. When we have led a lost person to Jesus and he has received the gift of eternal life, immediately we should enlist him (1) in church membership, (2) in the study of God's Word, (3) in some missionary organization, (4) in the Training Union. When he has received his training, the church must help him find his place in "the field that is white to harvest."

God needs more than professing Christians; he needs Christians at work for Christ in his church. Let our slogan be, "Every member saved and serving!"

Scriptures for the Soul-Winner to Use

1. To show one that he is a sinner—Rom. 3: 23; Isa. 53: 6; John 3: 18.
2. To show the sinner what it means to be lost—Prov. 29: 1; John 3: 18; John 3: 36; Rev. 20: 15.
3. To show the punishment for sin—Rom. 6: 23; Psalm 9:17; Matt. 13:41-42.
4. To show that God loves sinners—Isa. 55: 7; Rom. 5: 8; John 3: 16.
5. To show what the sinner must do—Acts 3: 19; Luke 18: 13; John 5: 24; Eph. 2: 8; Rom. 10:9, 10; John 3:16; Isa. 55:6-7; Acts 13:39.
6. To show what Christ did for sinners—Isa. 53: 5, 11; Rom. 5: 8; 1 Peter 2: 24.
7. To show the danger of delay—Prov. 27: 1; Heb. 2: 3; Luke 13: 3.
8. To show that Christ can keep those whom he saves—Jude 24; 1 Peter 1: 5; John 11: 26; John 10: 28; Rom. 8: 35-39.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CHRISTIAN'S DAILY LIFE

"We also engage to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Saviour, to secure it without delay."

I. The Final Test

The final test of a church member's religion is his *daily life.* One may join the church, be regular in attendance, contribute to its support, and try to win others, and yet if that one does not live a true, Christian life, his works will be fruitless. The world is watching the daily life of the church member.

> You are writing a gospel, a chapter each day,
> By the deeds that you do, the words that you say;
> Men read what you write, whether faithless or true;
> Say, what is the gospel according to you?

"Ye are our epistle, . . . known and read of all men; . . . ye are an epistle of Christ . . . written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in tables that are hearts of flesh" (2 Cor. 3:2-3).

II. Jesus Our Example

If we are to be true servants of Christ, and true to the church for which he gave himself, we shall need to take Jesus as our daily example, and strive

to "walk even as he walked." We shall need to follow him in five things:

1. *In Reverence.* When Jesus was only twelve he was found in the temple doing "his Father's business." He loved the place of worship, and he did not forget when he entered it that it was the dwelling place of his Father. He was reverent in spirit and reverent in service. Surely he must have remembered always the words, "Jehovah is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him" (Hab. 2:20).

2. *In Prayer.* "He went . . . apart to pray" is repeated over and over in the record of the life of Jesus. In hours of temptation, of need, of misunderstanding, of decision, of victory, we find him seeking the face of his Father. Jesus was a conqueror in all things because he prayed. A praying church will conquer every enemy. A praying Christian will be victor over all.

3. *In Knowledge of God's Word.* "Thy Word have I laid up in my heart" might easily have been the testimony of Jesus. He knew his Father's Word, and because he knew it, he knew his Father's will. No church member can be true who does not daily read and study the Book of God. The young Christian who fails to form the habit of daily Bible reading is destined to live a crippled Christian life.

4. *In Purity.* "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God," are the words of Jesus. Paul writes to the young man, Timothy, "Keep thyself pure." Jesus cannot use an impure life to do his service. If we would be worthy of a place in his kingdom, we must keep body, mind and heart unsoiled by the things of the world. "Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). Only as we are pure can we be strong to serve. "His strength is as the strength of ten because his heart is pure."

5. *In Service.* "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20: 28).

"He went about doing good," tells the story of the earthly life of Jesus in a sentence. He lived to serve others. The rich and poor, the old and young, the high and low he carried in his heart. He was never too busy to help one in need; he was never too tired to answer the cry of humanity. Jesus *gave himself* in service. He calls his church to carry on his work. He challenges each member to catch his spirit and meet human needs in his name. We are "saved to serve." We fail him and bring reproach upon his church when we indifferently turn away from the calls of men. "Whosoever would be first among you, shall be servant of all."

6. *In Consecration.* "I do always the things that please him," were the words of Jesus concerning his own life. How powerful his church would be if every member were to take these words for a life motto! If we are to make our lives count in his kingdom, we need to follow his example in consecration. The great need of every church member is to realize that Jesus expects each one to present his body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.

Someone was asked, "What is consecration?" The answer was, "He died my death for me that I might live his life for him,—consecration is living his life for him!"

If we are consecrated, we will try daily to do what he would have us do; to be what he would have us be; to say what he would have us say; to go where he would have us go. William Borden, the young millionaire who gave his life for Christ on the mission field, said: "Lord Jesus, I take hands off as far as my life is concerned. I put thee on the throne in my heart." That is consecration.

"Ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body" (1 Cor. 6:19-20). Living not to glorify self, but to glorify God—that is consecration.

Paul said, "For to me to live is Christ" (Phil 1: 21). That is consecration.

Jesus said, "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5: 48). That is consecration.

Jesus' mother said, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it" (John. 2: 5). That is consecration.

The world will never know Jesus until his children learn to glorify him in their homes, in society, in business, in government—in every relationship of life. Jesus calls to his church: "Come ye apart and be ye separate." It is the Christian's duty and high privilege to answer. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2: 15). "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7: 20).

Conclusion

During the terrible flood, when many states were in danger and thousands were homeless, a little boy said to his mother, "Mother, has God forgotten his rainbow?"

"What do you mean?" the mother inquired.

"Why, don't you remember that God put his rainbow in the sky and promised there wouldn't be another flood—and now there is one. Has God forgotten about his rainbow?"

The mother explained to the little boy that there never would be another flood that would destroy the whole earth, for God had promised, and God "will not forget his rainbow."

This question comes to us who are church members: have we forgotten our church covenant? When we joined the church, we made some serious promises. Have we forgotten? Can the world say of us as the world can say of God: "they will not forget their covenant"?

As we close our study of the meaning of church membership, let our earnest prayer be:

Lord God of Hosts be with us yet,
Lest we forget, lest we forget.

Shall we not from this hour look upon our church as the greatest institution in the world—an institution born in the heart of God and planted on the earth to perform the most sacred task of life—to lead lost souls back to the Father!

A young woman from Scotland told an audience how she became a citizen of the United States. With her hand on God's Word, she renounced allegiance to Scotland and pledged her allegiance to her new country, promising to love its flag, to keep its laws, and to be an honor to the land of her adoption. It was a thrilling story—that story of how she left her mother and sisters and brothers, and for duty's sake and because God called, gave herself to America, to fight its battles and to share in its victories; and how, through all the days, she has tried to keep her pledge to this land.

O youth of our Southern Baptist churches, if for Christ's sake and because God has called, you have left the old life and have pledged your allegiance to the King of kings; if you have promised to love his will, to keep his commandments, to bring honor to his church, may you dedicate yourselves anew to his service, and through all the years love, above all things else, your Lord Jesus Christ and the church which he purchased with his own blood! Then, indeed, you will have learned the true meaning of church membership!

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND EXAMINATION

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In class work the teacher should select at least ten questions from the following list, at the time for the examination, to be answered in writing, without help of any kind. One must attend at least six of the required ten class periods to be eligible for the class examination. Anyone who fails to be present at least six periods, or who for other valid reason cannot take the class examination, may take a special examination, but must answer at least twenty questions. Following home study an examination may be taken, but at least twenty questions must be answered in writing, without help of any kind. These questions will be sent upon request by the state Baptist Training Union department, or by the Training Union Department of the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tennessee.

The following questions should be used as a guide in reviewing the whole book. The teacher should then select at least ten of them to be answered in writing without the aid of the book.

CHAPTER I

1. Write from memory the paragraph entitled "My Church."
2. Tell how sin came into the world.
3. What did God do to save man from sin?
4. What two things must man do to be saved? Discuss. Give Scripture for each point.
5. What step follows salvation?

CHAPTER II

6. Describe the first baptism.
7. Why was Jesus baptized? Give Scripture.
8. Give the meaning of the word "baptize." Tell of the change from immersion to sprinkling and pouring.
9. What is the meaning of the act of baptism? Give Scripture.
10. Who may be baptized? Discuss and give Scripture.
11. What four steps are necessary for membership in a Baptist church?

CHAPTER III

12. Describe the first Supper.
13. On what three points do all denominations agree concerning the Lord's Supper?
14. In what point do Baptists differ from others?

15. Of what three facts is the Supper to remind us? Discuss briefly.
16. Why should every church member eat the Lord's Supper?
17. What is the meaning of 1 Corinthians 11:27-28?

CHAPTER IV

18. What five promises do we make in our church covenant concerning our work for and in the church?
19. What seven promises do we make concerning our daily living?
20. What five things do we promise to do for others?

CHAPTER V

21. Who was the Founder of the church?
22. What is a Baptist church?
23. Who were members of the first church? Give Scripture.
24. Into what five departments are our churches organized? Discuss the work of each briefly.
25. What fact concerning his church does each member need to remember?

CHAPTER VI

26. Tell about the first offering to God.
27. Give four reasons why we should give. Give Scripture for each.
28. Give five suggestions as to how we should give. Quote Scripture for each.

CHAPTER VII

29. What is the main task of the church? Discuss.
30. What three things should a soul-winner know? Discuss briefly.
31. What four things should a soul-winner do? Give Scripture for each.
32. How may we win the saved for service?

CHAPTER VIII

33. What is the final test of a church member's religion? Give Scripture.
34. In what six ways should we seek to be like Jesus? Discuss each briefly.
35. What has the study of this book meant to me?

OUTLINES

OUTLINE—CHAPTER I

The Plan of Salvation

I. The First Sin
   1. The Fact
   2. The Result

II. What God Did to Save Man from Sin
   1. Made a Promise
   2. Prepared the Way
   3. Sent Jesus, His Only Son

III. What Man Must Do to Be Saved
   1. He Must Repent of His Sins
   2. He Must Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ

IV. Public Confession Follows Salvation

OUTLINE—CHAPTER II

The Door into the Church

I. The First Baptism
   1. Who Baptized?
   2. Who Were Baptized?

II. The Meaning of the Act of Baptism
   1. Jesus Died and Rose Again
   2. Death to Sin and Resurrection to New Life
   3. Resurrection of the Body

III. Who May Be Baptized?
   1. Believers Only

IV. The Meaning of the Word "Baptize"
   1. Proved by Greek Dictionaries
   2. Proved by Competent Scholars

V. Baptism the Door into the Church

OUTLINE—CHAPTER III

The Lord's Supper

I. The First Supper

II. The Meaning of the Supper
1. That He Died for Us
2. That Our Spiritual Lives Are Sustained by Him
3. That He Is Coming Again

III. The Supper a Church Ordinance
1. Who Should Partake of It?
2. How Baptists Differ from Others

IV. Our Responsibility in Eating the Supper
1. Eat in Worthy Manner
2. Because He Commanded It
3. Essential to Obedience

OUTLINE—CHAPTER IV

Our Church Covenant

I. Introduction

II. Our Duties to Church

III. Our Personal Lives and Habits

IV. Duties to Others

V. Conclusion

OUTLINE—CHAPTER V

The Church Organized for Service

I. The Founder of the Church

II. The Membership of the Church

III. The Church Organized for Service
1. The W.M.U.
2. Prayer Service
3. Preaching Service
4. Sunday School
5. Training Union

OUTLINE—CHAPTER VI

Christian Giving

I. The First Offering

II. Why We Should Give
1. God is Owner
2. He Commands It
3. Our Gifts Are Needed

III. God's Plan for Our Giving
1. Cheerfully
2. Systematically
3. Proportionately
4. Individually
5. Sacrificially

OUTLINE—CHAPTER VII

Winning Others

I. Winning Others the Main Task of the Church

II. What a Soul-Winner Needs to Know
1. Know God
2. Know God's Word
3. Know Conditions and Needs of Lost

III. What a Soul-Winner Needs to Do
1. Pray
2. Seek
3. Go
4. Live

IV. Winning the Saved for Service
1. Enlist in Church Membership
2. Enlist in Study of Word
3. Enlist in Missionary Service
4. Enlist in Training Service

OUTLINE—CHAPTER VIII

The Christian's Daily Life

I. The Final Test

II. Jesus Our Example
1. In Reverence
2. In Prayer
3. In Knowledge of God's Word
4. In Purity
5. In Service
6. In Consecration

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